Poetry
A Magazine of Verse
Edited by Harriet Monroe

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April Romance

I saw the sunlight in a leafy place
    Bathing itself in liquid green and amber,
Where every flower had tears hid in its petals,
And every leaf was lovely with the rain.

With wondering eyes I saw how leaf and flower
    Held up their hands, and trembled with delight,
While on the gleaming bough the alighting bird
    Shook its wet wings like something fresh from heaven.

And when it sang, it told how earth to heaven
    Was turned; and how the miracle of morning
Had made of leaf and flower a deathless maiden
To be my mate and teach eternity.

[1]
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She took my hand: I understood each thing
   The leaf says to the flower when, both adoring,
   See like themselves, leaf-shaped and flower-painted,
   The sun descends, to bathe in painted shade.

She led me out—we left the leafy croft,
   And its wet fragrance, for the treeless town;
   But she picked up a dead leaf in the mud,
   And she found flowers in the children's hair.

Then she was gone—and I am seeking her:
   And every time at evening when it rains,
   And every time at morning, when the sun
   Bathes in the beauty of that leafy place,

Or when he looks into an urchin's eyes
   To see if April tears or smiles are there,
   And the wet dust scents summer leagues away,
   I hold my breath—the Eternal Maid returns.

A BRETON NIGHT

The winter seal is on the door.
   Three women sit beside the fire
Silent, and watch their shadows sprawl
Like sombre wolfhounds on the floor.

One “Christus,” nailed upon the wall,
   Pities the young wife great with child,
A Breton Night

Whose mate lies drowned beneath the sea.
She cannot tell how to bear it all,
Or live till Noel sets her free,
When she need not fear the quick and dead,
That every nightfall step the stair,
Awaiting the Nativity.

Now she will rise in her despair
To look out through the leaden panes
Between the wall-bed and the hearth;
And hear the wind like sea-waves there.

She does not know how, in the earth,
The dark blind seed doth hear the wind,
And think of death, and dream of birth,
As the window sends the firelight forth.

SONNETINA: PUNCH AND JUDY

This is the play of plays. Come, boys,
Old men, and little girls, and see
The rogue outdone in roguery,
And hear his lovely dreadful noise!
There is a catch in Punch's voice
When he escapes the gallows-tree,
That takes the heart outrageously
And makes the rascal street rejoice.
This is that antic play that made
The mummy laugh (when he had blood),

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That shall outlive the tragedy
In time of war with sables played:
The beggar's masque, and gamin's mood;
The first, last laugh of comedy.

**THE WOMAN OF SORROWS**

To bed I went for rest, no rest there to find:
Day might sleep, nor I; midnight waked my mind.
Oh a heavy wall has sorrow, a gloomy hedge has care:
They kept me close, kept me fast; held and bound me there.

The wind in the keyhole, it whimpered bitterly,
And I got up to open to my crying baby.
I'm not ashamed to cry myself, but I'm too proud to pray
To have the only things I've left rolled up and put away.

That was a babeless woman—Helen of Troy:
She never knew the sorrow, and never half the joy.
I pity the poor women that childing never knew,
And the nestling of the babe, that crying hungry grew.

Would you take from my bosom the feeling of my child?
As soon take the curlew, crying from the wild.
Oh my sorrow for my babe is become my baby.
The one they have taken, the other cannot be.

When you see the dog cast for the ewe in the snow;
When you watch the mother-thrush, with her nest broke below;

[ 4 ]
The Woman of Sorrows

Or look in the eyes of the dead that cannot look,
You may think of my baby and the breast it forsook.

NESTA’S MORNING SONG

I lived in the shadow,
The vesper-moth mine
That hates the green meadow
And yellow sunshine—
The merry sunshine.

Like one of the host
That fell out of heaven,
I doubted, I lost,
My angels out-driven—
My archangels seven.

O sorrow, my raiment,
And trouble, my care;
You are paid with a payment:
The Day-dawn is there—
God’s-gold in his hair.

Now come out of prison,
And step out of night;
And greet him, new risen,
My Day of delight,
My lovely delight.
DEATH AND THE JESTER

Black crow, art thou come
For Dagonet's wit?
It is quick as the light
Or the dragon-fly's dart.
It is born in a smile,
It is bred in the heart,
It is light, it is laughter.
It took life when Eve laughed
At the lion-cub's play;
It slept then awhile,
When her sorrow came after
With the son of the snake.
Eve's joy was my mother,
Not Eve's sorrow;
And the bird is my brother
That sings as he may.
In the close of my day,
Lies curl'd up the morrow
Like the fox in his bed.
And my wit, if I die,
Yet shall wake and shall fly—
Take music and live
When Dagonet's dead.

Ernest Rhys
I am afraid, O Lord, I am afraid!

These instruments so curiously formed,
This dynamo and meter, that machine
Cunning to grasp and hold with delicate hands
Your unchained lightnings... Lord, I am afraid—
Here in the empty silence of my room!

This lecture hall is oddly like a mouth—
Myself the tongue in it, myself the voice,
Shrill, thin across the empty chairs—how queer,
How skeleton-like appear these empty chairs!
Blank walls, blank platform (ineffectual things)
And bleak, bare windows where the startled day
On tiptoe stands, too lovely to come in...
A mouth it seems, a maw, huge, grim, slow, sure
Some day to close and crush me!

Lord, Lord, Lord,
Am I the thing the daylight falters from,
Spinning my dusty web of dusty words
To catch the plunging star we call the world,
Hanging it so a period? Fool, twice fool,
Who spider-like weave cosmic theories
In gossamer nets to trap the universe!
Spun but to tear a thousand tattered ways
And hang on every lilac, if a girl—
A red-lipped, shallow, care-free freshman girl—
Laugh at the sallies of a boy!

Afraid! . . .
Problems of sound and light, of light and sound,
Experiments, materials, theories,
The laws of motion, problems of sound and light,
Problems of sound and light. . . .

And presently
A gong will ring here like a doomsday bell
And through these doors, like winds that shake the woods,
Sons of the wind and daughters of the dawn,
Eternal, joyous, unafraid, comes youth:
Youth from a million colored realms of joy,
Youth storming up the world with flying hair
And laughter like a rose-red deluge spilled
Down dawn-lit heavens, burning all the sea!

Problems of light and sound! . . . Why, what care they,
These bright-eyed Chloes of our later date
For theories of sound—themselves the sound,
Themselves the light that brightens all the day?
Round every corner flits a flying foot,
Alluring laughter shaken fancy-free
In silver bells that break upon the air . . .
Evoe—evoe! Pan and the nymphs! With lips
Parted, and sparkling eyes, the young men follow—
Follow the swift-foot, laughter-loving nymphs
Whose eye-lids hold the world! Problems of light,
Problems of light—I am sick of light and sound!

Youth storming up the world! Hot, eager youth—
Youth with a question ever on its lips,
Impatient of the answer! youth with eyes
Implacable, remorseless, passionless,
Crying, "I thirst divinely—quench my thirst!"
Crying, "I thirsted and ye helped me not!"
And brushing past me. Amperes, dynamos,
Questions of voltage, coils, transformers, watts—
Shall these things reach them, teach them to be wise,
Temperate, noble? Surely greater texts
Lie in the lips and laughter of young girls,
Who look at me with pity scarce concealed
And curious wonder—me the dusty spider
Spinning my web in this obdurate room,
While eager tongues can scarcely pause an hour
From ripples of speech.

Ah, Lord, I am afraid!
For when I think to have them they elude me,
And when I guess it not, then have I taught.
Teach me, O Lord, and strengthen me—Thou knowest
I am afraid and weak . . . I am afraid!

APHRODITE

I walked among the gray-walled buildings.
The city girdles them,
And distant clamors
Break on the timeless towers as the sea,
In March,
Whirls its long lines of sound against the coast.

Among them the professors walked—
Stooping men with glasses
And queerly eager feet.
Some wore Van Dyke beards,
And on some the hair was silvered.
They talked very rapidly and all were laden
With many books.

From hall to solemn hall the hurrying students
Streamed in black lines—
Youths and maidens chatting endlessly,
Worn women with drawn mouths,
And dissatisfied men.
They were seeking something,
Aphrodite

Seeking, seeking,
Seeking they knew not what.

I too passed with them into a building.
It was crowded with students,
And they seemed in the dingy light of the hall
Like spectres of dead youth.
The walls were drab,
The bulletin boards by the offices
And the ugly chandeliers
Looked dusty in the light;
And I wondered what light did in this place,
Struggling through the narrow panes—
The lord of life,
The eternal sun.

Suddenly in the crowded hall
I saw her walking toward me,
The matchless, the miraculous,
The divine Aphrodite,
And around her the heedless students swarmed,
And saw her not.

Ah, Aphrodite!
Her body in the crowded way like a pillar of light
Shone naked and beautiful,
The silver limbs, the lustrous bosom;
Her face was terrible,
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Sweet and swift as lightning launched at midnight;
One arm was raised
And from her hand, her divine hand,
She scattered roses,
Red roses,
Crisp flakes of kindling fire.
A murmur of music floated around her
Like a sunset-colored cloud;
Her feet, moving, echoed strangely in my heart—
Eternal singing.
The centuries were singing;
The golden-hearted singers of the world
Were singing with them
Unutterable songs.

Thou dead, thou deathless goddess,
Sprung of the wind and the wave and the clean, sweet foam!
The wild songs of the moving feet
Choked into silence . . .
Ah, Aphrodite!

The students swarmed again about me,
Women with drawn mouths,
Dissatisfied men,
Seeking something, seeking,
Seeking they knew not what.

*Howard Mumford Jones*
THE WILD HONEY OF WISDOM

To E. L. L.

Better a thousand times is my friend than the nuts of knowledge to me.
She is wise with the wisdom the flower gives to the honey-gathering bee.
The ways of her mind are free to the winds that circle infinity.

My friend is a gardener of joy, and her radiant thoughts are seeds
That soon or late will be blossoming in the green of their destined meads—
She has sown in my heart a music that was sighed through moon-lit reeds.

Frail are her songs from fairydom, and so surpassing sweet
That in them is the laugh of leaves and the gleam of green-shod feet,
And in and out thread flights of wings with soft and rhythmic beat.

She holds a great enchantment in each white, lovely hand;
The days run through her fingers like bright escaping sand,
And all but grains of loveliness her sanctuary are banned.

Her feet, so used to wind-sweet ways, for rest were never meant.

'Tis on a wonder-seeking quest their tireless steps are bent. 
Her soul must be a nomad star with all the heavens for bent.

THE LEADER

It is but a little thing to see beauty where dream abounds,
And an easy thing to set sail for the shore in restful seas,
And who may not be as the note of a song 'mid tuneful sounds?
Yea, small things, these.

And hope is a lightsome guest when the mind is arrayed in stars,
And a pleasant task it is to thank God for a granted prayer.
And the scales that are builded to weigh but the sun-shaft bars
Have hands of air.

But I, even I who am speaking, would be as the steadfast pine
That clings to a barren rock in the teeth of the whistling wind;
For everlasting reclothing itself with a new green sign—
Nor look behind.

Arthur V. Kent
SPRING-PIECE

The strayed cherry tree,
   Bewildered by red-brick walls
In the lost by-street,
   Is dusted with green.

   Its white blossoms push
Long and scented fingers
Into the liquid air.

   Clouds of white butterflies
Silently drift,
Like loosened and breathing petals
Seeking the sun.

THE LINK

When the storm-clouds piled between us,
   In the dark and chasmed hour
When we struggled for a rebirth of our souls
And of our love for one another,
One thing held me to you.

   It was not the expanding structures of love
That we had builded together;
It was not vows,
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Nor inner promises of eternal fealty,
Nor our common purposes in life,
Nor the clenching grasp of passion—

It was the battered little coffee-pot
That we had bought together for five cents
From a ghetto push-cart,
That would not let me go.

_Clement Wood_

SHAKESPEARE

Because, the singer of an age, he sang
    The passions of the ages,
It was humanity itself that sprang
    To life upon his pages.

He told no single being's tale—there beat
    All beings on his pen;
And when he made a man to walk the street
    Forth walked a million men.

_Agnes Lee_
THE HORSE THIEF

There he moved, cropping the grass at the purple canyon's lip. His mane was mixed with the moonlight that silvered his snow-white side,
For the moon sailed out of a cloud with the wake of a spectral ship,
I crouched and I crawled on my belly, my lariat coil looped wide.

Dimly and dark the mesas broke on the starry sky.
A pall covered every color of their gorgeous glory at noon.
I smelt the yucca and mesquite, and stifled my heart's quick cry,
And wormed and crawled on my belly to where he moved against the moon!

Some Moorish barb was that mustang's sire. His lines were beyond all wonder.
From the prick of his ears to the flow of his tail he ached in my throat and eyes.
Steel and velvet grace! As the prophet says, God had "clothed his neck with thunder."
Oh, marvelous with the drifting cloud he drifted across the skies!

And then I was near at hand—crouched, and balanced, and cast the coil;
And the moon was smothered in cloud, and the rope through my hands with a rip!
But somehow I gripped and clung, with the blood in my brain aboil,—
With a turn round the rugged tree-stump there on the purple canyon's lip.

Right into the stars he reared aloft, his red eye rolling and raging.
He whirled and sunfished and lashed, and rocked the earth to thunder and flame.
He squealed like a regular devil horse. I was haggard and spent and aging—
Roped clean, but almost storming clear, his fury too fierce to tame.

And I cursed myself for a tenderfoot moon-dazzled to play the part,
But I was doubly desperate then, with the posse pulled out from town,
Or I'd never have tried it. I only knew I must get a mount and a start.
The filly had snapped her foreleg short. I had had to shoot her down.

So there he struggled and strangled, and I snubbed him around the tree.
Nearer, a little nearer—hoofs planted, and lolling tongue—

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Till a sudden slack pitched me backward. He reared right on top of me.

Mother of God—that moment! He missed me... and up I swung.

Somehow, gone daft completely and clawing a bunch of his mane,

As he stumbled and tripped in the lariat, there I was—up and astride

And cursing for seven counties! And the mustang? Just insane!

Crack-bang! went the rope; we cannoned off the tree—then—gods, that ride!

A rocket—that's all, a rocket! I dug with my teeth and nails.

Why we never hit even the high spots (though I hardly remember things),

But I heard a monstrous booming like a thunder of flapping sails

When he spread—well, call me a liar!—when he spread those wings, those wings!

So white that my eyes were blinded, thick-feathered and wide unfurled,

They beat the air into billows. We sailed, and the earth was gone.

Canyon and desert and mesa withered below, with the world.

And then I knew that mustang; for I—was Bellerophon!
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Yes, glad as the Greek, and mounted on a horse of the elder gods,
With never a magic bridle or a fountain-mirror nigh!

*M y c h a p s a n d s p u r s a n d h o l s t e r m u s t h a v e l o o k e d i t?* What's the odds?
I'd a leg over lightning and thunder, careering across the sky!

And forever streaming before me, fanning my forehead cool,
Flowed a mane of molten silver; and just before my thighs
(As I gripped his velvet-muscled ribs, while I cursed myself for a fool),

The steady pulse of those pinions—their wonderful fall and rise!

The bandanna I bought in Bowie blew loose and whipped from my neck.

My shirt was stuck to my shoulders and ribboning out behind.

The stars were dancing, wheeling and glancing, dipping with smirk and beck.

The clouds were flowing, dusking and glowing. We rode a roaring wind.

We soared through the silver starlight to knock at the planets' gates.

New shimmering constellations came whirling into our ken.
Red stars and green and golden swung out of the void that waits
The Horse Thief

For man's great last adventure; the Signs took shape—and then

I knew the lines of that Centaur the moment I saw him come!

The musical-box of the heavens all around us rolled to a tune

That tinkled and chimed and trilled with silver sounds that struck you dumb,

As if some archangel were grinding out the music of the moon.

Melody-drunk on the Milky Way, as we swept and soared hilarious,

Full in our pathway, sudden he stood—the Centaur of the Stars,

Flashing from head and hoofs and breast! I knew him for Sagittarius.

He reared, and bent and drew his bow. He crouched as a boxer spars.

Flung back on his haunches, weird he loomed—then leapt—and the dim void lightened.

Old White Wings shied and swerved aside, and fled from the splendor-shod.

Through a flashing welter of worlds we charged. I knew why my horse was frightened.

He had two faces—a dog's and a man's—that Babylonian god!

[ 21 ]
Also, he followed us real as fear. Ping! went an arrow past.
My broncho buck-jumped, humping high. We plunged
... I guess that's all!
I lay on the purple canyon's lip, when I opened my eyes at last—
Stiff and sore and my head like a drum, but I broke no bones in the fall.

So you know—and now you may string me up. Such was the way you caught me.
Thank you for letting me tell it straight, though you never could greatly care.
For I took a horse that wasn't mine! . . . But there's one the heavens brought me,
And I'll hang right happy, because I know he is waiting for me up there.

From creamy muzzle to cannon-bone, by God, he's a peerless wonder!
He is steel and velvet and furnace-fire, and death's supremest prize;
And never again shall be roped on earth that neck that is "clothed with thunder" . . .
String me up, Dave! Go dig my grave! I rode him across the skies!

William Rose Benét
CROSS PATCH

Her ardent spirit ran beyond her years
As light before a flame.
At fifteen, the tennis medal; at sixteen, the golf cup;
Then—the coveted!—bluest of blue ribbons
For faultless horsemanship.
No man in all that country,
Whatever his sport,
But had to own the girl a better man.
As that she merely laughed—saying that triumph
Is all a matter of thrill: who tingles most,
He wins inevitably.
Half bewilderment, half jest,
They called her Sprite, those ordinary folk
Who thought such urge, such instinct of life to joy
Was somehow mythical.
And having named her, they no longer thought of her,
To their relief, as young or old, one sex or other—
Just herself, apart, a goddess of out-of-doors.
School boys never dreamed of her tenderly
As one to send a perfumed valentine;
But when she strode among the horses in the field
They pawed the ground.
No leash could hold a dog when she passed by.

Then, despite her ardent race with time—
Ardent as though each moment were a dare
To some adventure of freed muscle and thrilled nerve—
A fleeter runner overtook her flight
And bound her tightly in a golden net—
Hands, feet and bosom; lips and hair and eyes—
Beauty, beauty of women.
Or was it she, unconscious what she raced,
Ran suddenly, breathless, glad and yet dismayed,
Into the arms of her own womanhood?
Which, no one knew, herself the least of all.
But no more did she fly beyond herself,
As eager to leave the very flesh behind,
But stayed with it in deep and rapturous content;
Her ardor turned
Henceforth within upon a secret goal.
Spirit and beauty seemed to flow together,
Each rapt in each
Like a hushed lily in a hidden pool.
Only at dances did the sprite peep out,
Ardent and yet controlled,
Alive to every turn and slope of the rhythm
As if the music spread a path for her
To what she truly sought.

'Twas at a dance she found it—found the man—
And no one had to question what she found:
Her eyes, her very finger-tips, proclaimed
The marvel it was to be a part of her,
A part of love.
The man—he had no medals and ribbons of triumph;
If she had fled on horse or even on foot
He never could have caught her.
It must have been his mind’s humility
That made her stay,
So thoughtless of itself, so thoughtful of
Forgotten wisdoms, old greatness, world riddles;
A patient, slow, but never yielding search
(Passionate too, with wings’ flight of its own)
For what—compared with other minds she knew—
Might well have seemed the blessed western isles.
They lived beyond the village on a hill
Beneath a row of pines; a house without pretense
Yet fully conscious of uncommon worth—
A house all books inside.

Their only neighbor was a garrulous man,
Who smoked a never finished pipe
Upon a never finished woodpile
Strategically placed beside the road
So none could pass without his toll of gossip.
He started it.
One day, pointing his thumb across the pines, he said:
"There’s something wrong up yonder;
Their honeymoon has set behind a storm.
I heard ’em fight last night . . .
Well, what’d he expect? They’re all alike—women."
Of course it got about,
And while no one quite believed,
Still, to make sure, some friendly women called.
They said that he was studying, quite as usual,
Not changed at all, just quiet and indrawn—
The last man in the world to make a quarrel;
And she, well, of course she wasn't so easy to read,
Always strange and different from a child;
But even in her the sharpest eye saw nothing
That seemed the loose end of the littlest quarrel.
No couple could have acted more at ease;
And anyhow, a woman like that, they said,
Would never have stayed so quiet in the pines
With unhappiness, but tossed it from her broadcast
Like brands from a bonfire.
She said the house was damp—and that was all.
At last even the old garrulous woodpile
Knocked out the ashes of it from his pipe.

But then, a few months later, a frightened servant girl
Ran at early morning from the pines,
Crying the judge in town.
She said her mistress suddenly, without cause,
Standing by her in the kitchen, turned on her
Blackly with words no decent girl deserved,
Then struck her full in the face, spat on her, pulled her hair.
She wanted compensation, the servant did,
And a clean character before the world,
Yes, and punishment for the beast who hurt her—
That is, if the woman wasn’t mad.

Mad—oh ho! the shock of it
Rolled seething over the place like a tidal wave,
And in the wake of the wave, like weed and wreckage,
Many a hint and sense of something wrong at the pines
Sprawled in the daylight.

A stable boy remembered
How not a week before she’d called for a horse,
The spiritedest saddle they had,
And when she brought him back ’twas late at night,
The horse and woman both done up,
Slashed, splashed and dripping;
But all she said was, “Send the bill;
The beast’s no good—I’ll never ride again.”

So this and other stories quite as strange
Stretched everybody’s nerves for the trial to come
And made them furious when it didn’t come—
He settling with the girl outside of court.
The judge’s wife knew all there was to know:
Not jealousy at all, just nerves—
Every woman, you know, at certain times . . .
Of course, agreed the village, so that’s it? still
(Not to be cheated outright), still,
Even so, she’d best take care of that temper;
A husband’s one thing, an unborn child’s another—
She’d always been a stormy, uncontrollable soul.
Some blamed the husband he had never reined her in,
Most pitied him a task impossible.
All waited the event on tiptoe—
It wasn’t like other women, somehow, for her to have a child.

The months passed, no child was born.
Then other women sneered openly:
She wanted one and couldn’t—served her right.
This lapse from the common law of wives
Was all the fissure the sea required
To force the dike with. Little by little then,
The pressure of year on year,
The pines and the two lives they hid
Grew dubious, then disagreeable, then at last sinister.
At this point the new generation took up
Its inheritance, the habit of myth,
And quite as a matter of course it found her hateful,
Ugly, a symbol of sudden fear by darkened paths—
Cross Patch!

And one by one the people who were young
Beside her youth, moved off or died or changed,
Forgetting her youth as they forgot their own;
Until if ever she herself
Had felt a sudden overwhelming pang
To stop some old acquaintance on the road
And stammer out, “You know—don’t you—the girl I was—
I was not always this, was I?” she might have found
A dozen at most to know the Sprite her youth,
But none to clear the overtangled path

[ 28 ]
Cross Patch

That led from Sprite to Cross Patch; not one, not one,
But looking back would damn
The very urge of joy in Sprite, and all its ardent spirit
For having mothered Cross Patch; not one, not one,
To see the baffled womanhood she was,
Orphan of hopes too bright, not mother of evil.
And thus besieged on all sides by the present
She fought against all sides, as if by fury
To force one way to yield.

For both it was a nightmare, not a life, and neither
Could well have told how it had ever begun;
But once begun it seemed inevitable,
A storm that settled darkly round their souls,
Unwilled as winter,
With moan of wind through sere and barren boughs
And skies forever masked.
The first blow of the quarrel had been hers,
A blow unguessed by either, for she struck
Like nature, not to hurt but to survive.
But wrath accrued
So soon thereafter that the blow seemed angry,
And she struck out again with eyes and tongue
Pursuing him, the angrier at his grief,
Until in sheer defense he hit
Not at herself, but at her blows, to ward them;
Keeping the while
His thought above the dark upon a star or so

[ 29 ]
Fixed in the past. But she defended her wrath
As part of her dignity and right: they stormed
Up, up the hill and down,
Increasing darkness to the end of life.
Of him friends said
He seemed like a lonely sentinel
Posted against the very edge of doom,
Whom no watch came relieving.
“She’ll kill him yet, the fool!” the woodpile’s verdict
Before the pipe went out for the last time,
Leaving the pines unneighbored.

But he was wrong, the urn outlasted the flame.
One night, hands at her throat, she came
And knelt before him, timidly reaching out
And trying to speak, to speak—struggling as if words
Were something still to learn.
At last speech broke from her, so agonized
He hardly knew if it were supreme wrath or supreme sup­plication:
“You did not love me . . .”
And as he bent to her he felt
Her girlhood cry, a murdered thing returned.
He hoped that it was wrath, as easier to endure,
Feeling it burn from mind to heart, from heart to soul,
Gathering more awe, more terror, at each advance.
Like a priest with sacrifice it passed
The colonnades of his thought, entering without pause
An unknown altar of his being
Behind a curtain never moved before.
"You did not love me ..."
Both gazed upon the sacrifice held up
As though it were the bleeding heart of their own lives
Somehow no longer their own.

And then the priest returned, slowly, pace by pace,
Out of the hush of feeling into the hush of thought.
It was the priest and not himself, the man believed,
Who like an echo, not less agonized,
Whispered across the waste of many lives,
Whispering "No ..."

Whose heart, the man’s or woman’s, lowest stooped
To raise the other prostrate heart aloft
With supplication and consolement, urging it
To live—oh, live!—dying itself the while,
God knew before the beginning of the world.
We only know that stooping so, dust turned to dust,
All hearts meet at last.

Horace Holley
SHAKESPEARE

What manner of man was this who peopled a provincial stage, made music of a barbarous tongue, played a few parts, dreamed many dreams, set up an estate in his native village, and died in his prime three hundred years ago this month? What manner of man was it whose name, during these three centuries, has been rung on all the bells of fame, whose people are the friends of all the world, whose thinking washes under all our cargoes, and whose rhythms are the waves on which our visions ride? Everywhere he is present—we cannot escape him; he passes current like the coin of the realm. He is part of our language, of the phrasing and movement and beat of it; and when we are silent the very winds and stars march to his music. What manner of man was this who has become so much more important to the world than he ever was to himself?

Of course there is only one word that a man can write with whatever expenditure of ink—the word myself. Shakespeare has been called impersonal, but he could no more escape this word than the clamorous egotist who shouts "I! I! I!" on every page. If he hides behind his characters, he is nevertheless there, and the search for his evasive personality is the central and secret fascination of his work. Some writers are easy to find in the books they leave us, and
Shakespeare

when found they may be no great matter; others reveal
themselves only to their friends, and reward them with
special intimacy; others pause for a beautiful gesture, a
smile, almost a touch, and are off again, always alluring and
eluding. But this poet, who, giving himself away in thirty-
seven plays and an hundred and fifty-four sonnets, was yet
the most reserved of men, this poet is the most magnetic
of all. The things we discover of him—that sympathy and
insight, that humor and shrewdness, that love of all life
and passion for all beauty, that poignant tenderness at the
dge of a grave, that strange worldliness and baffling in-
difference to his art—these are but the beginning of his self.
His secret is always deeper within, further beyond. The
more we get—those of us who get beneath the surface at all
—the more awaits us.

Because this poet does not wear his heart on his sleeve
or explain himself to the passer-by, and because a certain type
of mind delights in puzzles and cryptograms and facile inter-
pretations, we have had a thousand misreadings of his char-
acter; and even huge and elaborate Baconian theories to rob
us of our Shakespeare, and substitute for that large figure
something small and definite and precise. The “myriad-
minded,” we are told, must have been a soldier to reveal
war, a lawyer to understand law, a courtier to present princes,
and of late Mr. Frank Harris has soberly asserted that he
must have been a madman to compass the madness of Lear.
What are these foolish commentators doing but exposing
their own folly? The colossus stands there unshaken, smil-
ing his enigmatic solemn smile, with that same look of pity and tenderness in his eyes.

It takes a poet to interpret a poet. Holbein might have painted Shakespeare if he had lived long enough, or Dürer might have made a copperplate of him as mysterious as the *Melancolia*. But no meaner imagination can quite compass that soul adrift between hell and heaven, devoured by earthly desires and divine despairs, writing immortal plays as a kind of lucrative by-play, a sop and solace to his tyrannous imagination, which clamored for freedom in worlds greater than his own. Now and then, during these three centuries, someone has cast a flash-light on this figure, but no one has yet revealed all the pride and power of it, all the sorrow and weakness. Even Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, in his illuminating monologue, *Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford*, though he gets nearer to the heart of his subject than any of the thousand-and-one critics and panegyrists before him—even he does not strip that spirit bare.

Shakespeare himself makes confession, of course, in the sonnets, besides his less deliberate confession in the plays. The sonnets present his supreme experiences—exquisite emotion, love exalting or degrading, conviction of sin, conviction of fame, the sense of unendurable beauty, the magnanimity of unalterable love, the blight of decay and death, the glory of spiritual life. And through the poem runs the theme of *Hamlet*—that sense of inadequacy for life which must haunt the artist, the man of thought and imagination: self-
torture over doing always the wrong thing while seeing the right, self-disgust that his lady's other lovers can outplay him, that any fool can seize the moment for action better than he.

Perhaps nowhere else, in English personal poetry, does one feel so sure of the poet's absolute uncompromising sincerity. In Shakespeare's sonnets a wide range of human experience is transmuted into the subtlest music ever wrought out of English words; and so, for one who knows and loves them, they reach the heart of any mood, like a dear friend's voice. Seek them as a relief from petty cares and they soothe like running waters; go to them in grief and they are elegies, in joy and they chime like bells, in triumph and they sing paens. Remorse, despair, pity, love, worship—the most diverse emotions—all find their answer here. It is as though the poem had been sung for the special mood we bring to it, so intimately, so healingly, does it touch each wound and fill the chambers of the soul with beauty.

The sonnets record a period of passionate experience in a life whose serenity is elsewhere its strongest note. They are the forty days of struggle in the wilderness, and they bring, not bitterness or violence, but surer vision and deeper sympathy. They lead from the comedies to the tragedies, from Much Ado About Nothing to Macbeth and King Lear.

It is my feeling that from the time of the sonnets to his death—about fifteen years—the poet steeled himself against devastating emotional excitement and took refuge in his imagination. One thing seemed about as important as an-
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other in the actual world; he felt something of that illumined apathy which Browning ascribes to the resurrected Lazarus. The people around him became part of the dream, gaining color and significance but losing substantiality. Gradually his serenity regained its poise: we have the proof of this in The Tempest, and we should have had more in that unwritten greatest play of all had he lived to grow old in Stratford.

One of Shakespeare's love lyrics—perhaps the most magical—has long seemed to me expressive of a larger meaning. Let us listen to its haunting music:

Take—oh, take those lips away
      That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day—
      Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
      Bring again—
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
      Sealed in vain!

I do not know what lady first heard that madrigal. To inspire it was worth a life of care, and we may well hope that this high service to the world may have shortened the purgatorial pains she had to suffer for her perfidy. But perhaps we should think of her as a symbol of something less tangible, a symbol of life itself. Surely it was thus that Shakespeare knew and loved his world. Tantalizing mistress, what vow could bind her to his soul forever? Elusive and unconquerable, her trustful eyes could turn from him, her smile could pass to another before it had time to fade, her oaths were broken even in the uttering. Royal and bountiful she is,
Shakespeare

beautiful and strong; but unremembering and insecure. For a time her treasures crown him and all her raptures fall about his soul. But even in the moment of ecstasy he knows the vanity of their sensuous joys. Then above all he feels the infinite summons. The world and its accepted values fade off into nothingness, time loses its brief space in the eternal years, knowledge is drawn up like a curtain before the unfathomable mystery, and all our human pride becomes the shadow of a dream. Before that inescapable vision that are life and song and fame? Bubbles to be blown for a toy, to rise and gleam and vanish and be thought of no more. And so, deeper than his love of life was his indifference to it, wider than his knowledge of the world was his recklessness of its applause. Flowers or ashes—he cared not; kisses or broken vows—he could live and love for either. Thus in his personality there is something selfless and inscrutable which from age to age has fascinated the world. We feel him vast, impartial, beneficent, like light and air. We return to the old simile and liken him to the ocean for universality and strength and poise. And we feel in his presence, as before these natural forces, that he tells not all, he gives not all. We take from him Hamlet, Lear, The Tempest unsatisfied, wondering what he could have done if he had ever put forth his utmost power. We diagram his greatness, we explain it in terms of earth and in terms of heaven. We theorize and define and dream, but the heart of his mystery still eludes us. We are baffled by his impenetrability, and we cast him from our hearts into the outer darkness of in-
tellectual admiration, and clasp once more the familiar idols —those lesser heroes whose limitations make them kin to us. And he knows that we are faithless, that we take him for what he is not, that our hearts are cold to him. He had foreseen it all—that fame is but a breath, that immortality is but light across a grave. He was not deceived, and his love can never change with the altering of ours. For the centre of his soul, as of all great souls, is love. Still out of the deeps of time his voice seems calling to the approaching years:

Take—oh, take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day—
Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again—
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain!

H. M.

STATUS RERUM—THE SECOND

It is over three years since I set out to write Status Rerum (number one), as a brief summary of the state of affairs in contemporary poetry. It appeared in POETRY as a summary of affairs in England, for my remarks about American verse were at that time deemed by our editor either impolite or imprudent. My opinion of the work of nearly all the older living American poets, save Bliss Carman, has no whit changed; to them and to their generation of editors we owe nothing which would look polite in print. Perhaps I may
now be permitted to say this, because it may be a sort of surety for my candor, seeing that I am about to present a more pleasing schedule.

During three years of varying irritation and consolation I have seen POETRY print a certain amount of rubbish and a very considerable amount of the best work now done in English. I do not think that our editors have missed much that was really worth printing. I dare say there is not enough really good poetry actually written per month to fill completely all the space in this magazine.

It has published the best current work of Mr. Yeats and of Ford Madox Hueffer, the only two older poets whose writing has any lively significance. It has published Padraic Colum, Allen Upward, "H. D.," T. S. Eliot, Aldington at his best, Orrick Johns, Frost, Carlos Williams, Bodenheim, Sandburg, myself, Rodker, etc.

The St. Louis Mirror scored in getting the Spoon River Anthology—that is the one big hole in our record, and POETRY was not slow to recognize the merit of that work. The best English work that we have missed has been a few short poems by Harold Monro and a few by Mrs. Anna Wickham.

Imagism, before it went off into froth, and before stray editors used to write to me to complain that their mail was full of imitations of "imagism, vorticism, vers libre, etc., with no body to it"—the early imagism—had its first breath of air in these pages. At present its chief defects are sloppiness, lack of cohesion, lack of organic centre in individual

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poems, rhetoric, a conventional form of language to be found also in classical text-books, and in some cases a tendency more than slight towards the futurist's cinematographic fluidity.

However, coming at the noble art from the angle of nationalism or chauvinism, dividing the produce geographically, one finds some ground, or at least some excuse, for congratulating ourselves or our country.

Looking at the names of English writers in my first Status Rerum, I find that not one of them has bettered his position one iota. Only Mr. Yeats and Mr. Hueffer have done work worthy of notice. The rest have either stagnated or relapsed completely into silence.

As for the younger generation, in 1912 America had very little wherewith to challenge comparison with England or France. At the present writing one can select an all-America team of les jeunes to compete with les jeunes of either France or England or any other nation.

I am not "buttering" anyone. One usually refrains from complimenting young poets, for it may be thought that compliments tend to make them sit down and contemplate their own beauties, which is not one's intention. I am simply cataloguing cold facts. I do not know Mr. Masters' age, but his work is of our decade; its relations are with our decade and not with the decade preceding, and if we are judging the output of the last three years we must count it in.

With regard to the best work done in these three years we may as well recognize that a certain part of it is American.
Eliot, Frost and "H. D." are Americans; so also are Williams, Sandburg, Bodenheim, Orrick Johns, John Gould Fletcher, etc.

Against a team made up of these writers you can place in England: Aldington, Monro, Rodker, Flint, Lawrence, Mrs. Wickham, Douglas Goldring; and we suffer in no degree by the comparison. If Fletcher occasionally goes off in rhetorical bombast, it is at least better than Mr. Abercrombie's bombast. And Lindsay is more alive than his numerous English confrères. As for the sickly multitude pouring out mediocre and sub-mediocre work in both countries—in the first place they don't count, and, in the second place, if any among them do turn out a good scrap of work these scraps neutralize.

Even France—and France has not been at war all three years—even France will not leave us hopelessly in the rear. We may estimate the weight of her younger generation at more or less that of Jules Romains, Charles Vildrac, M. Jouve and MM. Klingsor, Jacob, Appollinaire, etc. (Recognizing most emphatically that America of the former generation can in no way compete with the mass of De Regnier, De Gourmont, Francis Jammes, Tailhade, et leurs amis.)

The rest of the current French work is full of loose Hugoesque rhetoric, sociology, mucked mysticism for the multitude, aqueous bombast, and all the fluid and ubiquitous diseases. I don't mean to say there is none good, but one's impression of fifty-odd books of their verse is that they need a deal of sorting, a deal of excerpting and compression.
I don't know whether one is to lump the Irish poets into an all-empire team, or to judge them by themselves. James Joyce, by far the most significant writer of our decade, is confining himself to prose; or, to be meticulously exact, he has written a few brief poems, which POETRY will soon publish. I do not know that one can say anything of either Colum or Campbell that one would not have said three years ago.

I shall not indulge in hopes or prophesyings. Certain young American writers have appeared; I can hardly be accused of undue prejudice in favor of my native country in stating the fact of their appearance. But I do not wish to focus attention on what has been done; it is better to keep an eye on what still awaits doing.

Others, with its pages open to any hair-breadth experiment, is deserving of welcome. We can scarcely be too ready to inspect new ventures, and it is a pleasing contrast to the stuffiness of some of our ancestral publications, which still reek of eighteen-fifty. Mr. Kreymborg, its editor, has published Eliot, Cannell, Williams, himself, Carlton Brown, etc. Moreover, certain purely commercial and popular magazines have lifted an eyelid: H. L. Mencken has more or less discovered John McClure, Wattles, and "John Sanborn."

Orrick Johns writes me most vigorously of the genius of a dramatist, Sadakichi Hartman. "But print?—put Rabelais through a bath of perfume, and serve in cigarette holders at a boudoir spree!"
I have not seen enough of the work of most of these writers to form any sort of judgment, but it seems to me that they have among them a sense of activity which was lacking in New York when I passed that way five years ago. At any rate the country looks less like a blasted wilderness than it did a few years since, and for that let us be duly thankful—and let us hope it is not a straw blaze.

Ezra Pound

REVIEWS

MR. MASEFIELD'S NEW BOOK

Good Friday and Other Poems, by John Masefield. Macmillan.

The title poem of this volume, a drama of the Crucifixion, is less interesting than the sonnets which follow it. Here the poet, like many a sonneteer before him, presents his philosophy of life, describes his despairing pursuit of Beauty, who is “within all Nature, everywhere,” and who yet eludes capture, and gives her votary only

One hour, or two, or three in long years scattered.

No summer butterfly is this brooding spirit of Beauty, but the secret music at the heart of creation, the sublime harmony which the poet overhears in those few divine moments, and to which, forever after, he would tune his life and his lyre.

For these, so many years of useless toil,
Despair, endeavor, and again despair,

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Sweat, that the base machine may have its oil,
Idle delight to tempt one everywhere.
A life upon the cross. To make amends
Three flaming memories that the death-bed ends.

The undertone of these sonnets is profound sadness. Having lost the God whom he "was taught in youth," the poet faces almost with agony the perishing loveliness of the flesh, the earth, the sidereal universe—of all things visible or imagined, and lives on under sword-like flashes of a light too glorious and terrible to be endured.

What am I, Life? A thing of watery salt
Held in cohesion by unresting cells,
Which work they know not why, which never halt,
Myself unwitting where their Master dwells.
I do not bid them, yet they toil, they spin
A world which uses me as I use them;
Nor do I know which end or which begin
Nor which to praise, which pamper, which condemn.
So, like a marvel in a marvel set,
I answer to the vast, as wave by wave
The sea of air goes over, dry or wet,
Or the full moon comes swimming from her cave,
Or the great sun comes forth: this myriad I
Tingles, not knowing how, yet wondering why.

Beside the passionate self-revelation of these sonnets, much of this poet's earlier work becomes stage drapery or melodrama. For Mr. Masefield, as we have said before, is stronger as a reflective and descriptive poet than as a playwright or a novelist in verse. In such sonnets as These myriad days, There on the darkened deathbed, So in the empty sky, It may be so with us, There is no God, The little robin, When all these million cells—in these and others we find a poignant sincerity and simplicity in the expression of
Mr. Masefield's New Book

a modern attitude toward life, of a feeling enforced by modern science in millions of hearts.

The short one-act play *Good Friday* is comparatively artificial. The poet presents the drama of the Crucifixion from afar off, through its reaction upon Pilate, his wife Procula, the centurion Longinus, Herod, the Jewish crowd, and a madman who, like most stage lunatics, is saner than the worldly wise. We watch the approach and consummation of the sublime event as through a veil darkly, noting only a kind of dim processional. The play has movement, and a certain decorative quality; but, as in a procession, the people are conventional characters rather than individuals.

There is a dangerous allure in this subject, but the poet who touches it faces a formidable rival. The intense vitality of the gospels, which has survived nearly two millennia, makes any modern assault seem weak. In the bible story, each personage of the great drama stands out as a living passionate human being. In Mr. Masefield's version they all seem to mouth their speeches and gesticulate like stage figures. Pilate suffers the most, for he loses his time-honored taciturnity and becomes a man of words. And the Madman is as conventional as the others, saying only the expected thing. The play has a certain dignity, and at times beauty, both reaching a climax in the centurion's description of the Crucifixion.

But the sonnets are the thing.  

*H. M.*
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**A PIONEER**


Certain zealous admirers of Mr. Robinson insist that he was the beginning of the "new movement." In the stern stript austerities of *Captain Craig* (published in 1902) they find the heredity of Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, and other poets of modern life. In a certain sense this may be true, even though Mr. Masters, at least, never read a line of Robinson until a year after *Spoon River* was written. Before the heavily scented 'nineties were over, Mr. Robinson was writing, in a grave bare style, simple and direct poems about his neighbors, and since then, in *The Children of the Night* and *The Town Down the River*, he has gone his own way among them with complete independence. If he does not move us so deeply as the other two poets, if his work is less rich, his revelation of life less complete, this may be because of a slower, colder temperament. We do not feel him so much in the midst of things. He seems to stand aloof, like a scientist, analyzing each human being curiously, as a specimen. Perhaps, as Anders Zorn once said of a certain painter, "He does not love enough."

But in my opinion Mr. Robinson has never done better work than in this lastest volume. *Flammonde* is a portrait as deftly drawn as *Minever Cheevity*, and more subtle in its type, that of a whimsically blighted nobility. *The Gift of God* presents the almost grotesque exaltation of motherhood, *John*
A Pioneer

Gorham is a complete little tragedy of disillusionment, and in such poems as Old Trails and Llewellyn and the Tree we observe certain odd and unexpected tricks by which fate keeps a relentless control over human lives. Only in the final and titular poem does the poet seem to reflect about life in his own person, putting a bitter question to his soul in such lines as these:

If, after all that we have lived and thought,
All comes to Naught—
If there be nothing after Now,
And we be nothing anyhow,
And we know that—why live?—

And he finds no more quieting answer to the question than a dim perception of something "too permanent for dreams."

But this we know, if we know anything:
That we may laugh and fight and sing
And of our transience here make offering
To an orient Word that will not be erased,
Or, save in incommunicable gleams
Too permanent for dreams,
Be found or known.

The portrait of Shakespeare is a masterpiece. Everyone has written about Shakespeare, but no one, so far as I can remember, has got beneath his skin with such devilish ingenuity and angelic divination as Mr. Robinson when, as he puts it in the title, Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford. The poet cleverly shifts all responsibility by making Rare Ben do the talking, and Ben, with a neighbor's frankness, a friend's humorous affection, and a fellow-poet's admiration, tells what seems the truth about that enigmatic figure as no one has ever told it before. I cannot quote from
the poem—it is too compact. Go read it—in this tercentenary month.

Perhaps we may more fitly quote from Cassandra, in which the poet turns his flash-light upon a whole nation, and sketches the American visage in sharp and stinging lines:

"Because a few complacent years
Have made your peril of your pride,
Think you that you are to go on
Forever pampered and untried?

"What lost eclipse of history,
What bivouac of the marching stars,
Have given the sign for you to see
Millenniums and last great wars?

"Your Dollar, Dove and Eagle make
A Trinity that even you
Rate higher than you rate yourselves;
It pays, it flatters, and it's new.

"The power is yours, but not the sight;
You see not upon what you tread;
You have the ages for your guide,
But not the wisdom to be led.

"Think you to tread forever down
The merciless old verities?
And are you never to have eyes
To see the world for what it is?

"Are you to pay for what you have
With all you are?"—No other word
We caught, but with a laughing crowd
Moved on. None heeded, and few heard.

H. M.
Images Old and New, by Richard Aldington. Four Seas Co.,
Boston.

One of the highest pleasures that the intelligent and dis­
criminating reader of poetry can have, is to discover some poet
who employs throughout his work a clean and sure technique.
There have been few such poets in English, but in France,
Italy, and wherever the classic spirit has shown itself strongly,
we can discover many examples to prove the crudity of our
usual slap-dash Anglo-Saxon methods. Recently there have
been in England signs of a return to that simplicity and
restraint which are the qualities of highest art, and it is to be
hoped that the war will have the effect of still further clari­
fying the English spirit, over-muddied with floods of Vic­
torian sentiment and rhetoric. Of this admirable tendency
Mr. Aldington is the precursor and the most shining example.

The impression one gains from the reading of the thirty-
five pieces which he has now gathered together and given to
the public, is one of uniform technical excellence. Here is a
style like a sword-blade, bright, keen, nervous, and never
exuberant. Nowhere does the poet say too much, nowhere
does he permit his image to become clouded with long accu­
mulations of detail, vague sentiments or indefinite moralizings. In fact, it may be that he sometimes says too little
for those who seek to read as they run, or for those who are
too readily inclined to look for that heroic strumming and
smashing which is vulgarly considered to be the chief char-
acteristic of "major" poetry. But it is necessary to point out that this common view of poetry is not that of the great artists, whether they be Greeks, Chinese, Japanese, or Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. "In restraint the master first displays himself." By such standards Mr. Aldington must be judged, and he is neither "major" nor "minor," but simply a poet.

These *Images Old and New* as he calls them, divide themselves roughly into two classes, the first dealing with Greek antiquity, the second with modern life. In either case, whatever be the subject, the unity is preserved, and it is a unity of style, of attitude. Mr. Aldington is a poet who speaks the truth. He is never vaguely romantic, or sentimental, or writing to satisfy anything but his own artistic conscience. There is scarcely a page in this small volume in which we cannot find something that will satisfy us at the first reading, and yet more fully with successive readings; but there are some pages which will begin by shocking us and end by convincing us. Here is a force which attracts us the more completely for its apparent simplicity: and it is the force not of realism but of reality.

It is very difficult among so much that is good to select for quotation a single poem and to set it apart from the indissoluble unity of the book that contains it. Here, however, is a brief example which I pick because it is among the less frequently quoted poems:

The cripples are going to church.
Their crutches beat upon the stones,
And they have clumsy iron boots.

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Mr. Aldington's Images

Their clothes are black, their faces peaked and mean;
Their legs are withered
Like dried bean pods.
Their eyes are stupid as frogs'.

And the god, September,
Has paused for a moment here
Garlanded with crimson leaves.
He held a branch of pointed oak.
He smiled like Hermes the beautiful
Cut in marble.

There we have it all: a sense of the sordidness of existence, of the wayward and casual beauty with which nature decks that sordidness; irony and pity, concealed yet poignant; and I know not what feeling of nostalgia and transience that arises somehow from all these. Mr. Aldington is a poet, as Simonides and Turgenev were poets.

We in America, at least, have much to learn from him. The inchoate vastness of our material and of its intertangled racial currents, the haphazardness of our methods and institutions, all tend to drive us towards a poetry which is ephemeral in that it is hectic, disorganized, lacking in reflective judgment. Europe has already taught us to distinguish the vital elements in the work of such men as Whitman and Poe from the unvital: Europe can teach us more. There are at least a dozen poets in this country who could not do better than to keep a copy of Images Old and New on their shelves, for constant reference and comparison.

John Gould Fletcher
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OUR CONTEMPORARIES

I

Poetry is not only an art—it is becoming almost an activity.

The Drama League of America has prepared for distribution a long list of "Available Material for Shakespeare Tercentennial Programs," for the use of schools, clubs, etc., through this spring and summer of the anniversary year. These programs consist of folk dances, music, and a variety of masques and pageants. Among these latter are fairy masques for children, elaborated from scenes in the plays; and the most important program is Mr. Percy Mackaye’s Caliban, which is to be acted through the season by a touring company.

II

The city of Newark, New Jersey, has offered thirteen prizes, beginning with a first prize of $250, and amounting to $1,000 in all, for poems celebrating the city and its history, in honor of its two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary. The poems must not be over one thousand words long, and they must be submitted anonymously before April tenth, to a committee consisting of Prof. John C. Van Dyke, Mr. Thomas L. Masson, Miss Theodosia Garrison, and certain officials and teachers of Newark.

We would humbly suggest that the committee should be composed entirely of poets, following the example of such contests in painting, sculpture and architecture.
Our Contemporaries

III

Under the inspiration of lectures by Miss Katharine Howard, author of Eve and other books of verse, the Poetry Society of Utah has been established in Salt Lake City, under the presidency of Miss Myra Sawyer. Similar societies should be founded in many cities. In every such group would probably be found at least one member with a musical voice and a feeling for rhythm, who could read aloud the best modern poetry without turning it into broken prose. Extreme simplicity should be the aim of such a reader—no "elocutionary" effects. The production of verse among the members, and ruthless criticism of it, might well be encouraged also, as an aid to appreciation or a stimulus to possible talent.

NOTES

Of the two English poets represented this month, one, Mr. Ernest Rhys, has appeared before in the magazine. Long a prominent member of Welsh and Celtic societies, and editor of Everyman's Library, he published, in 1894, A London Rose, and since then Gwenevere, a Lyric Play, and The Masque of the Grail.

Mr. Arthur V. Kent, of London, was born in 1892, and has appeared thus far only in two or three English papers.

Of the American poets:

Agnes Lee (Mrs. Otto Freer), of Chicago, author of The Sharing and other books of verse (Sherman, French & Co.), has been a frequent contributor to POETRY; also Mr. William Rose Benét, of New York, one of the editors of The Century, whose latest book is The Falconer of God and Other Poems (Yale University Press).

Mr. Horace Holley, a young New Yorker who has appeared once before, is the author of The Inner Garden (Sherman, French & Co.) and The Stricken King (Shakespeare Head Press).
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Mr. Clement Wood, a native of Alabama, and now a New York journalist, has contributed verse to The Masses and other papers.

Mr. Howard Mumford Jones, now a graduate student of the University of Chicago, is the author of a tiny pamphlet, privately printed in Wisconsin and recently reviewed in POETRY, A Little Book of Local Verse.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ORIGINAL VERSE:
The Listeners, by Walter De La Mare. Henry Holt & Co.
Songs of the Fields, by Francis Ledwidge, with Introduction by Lord Dunsany. Duffield & Co.
Good Friday and Other Poems, by John Masefield. Macmillan.
"— and Other Poets", by Louis Untermeyer, Henry Holt & Co.
Today and Tomorrow, by Charles Hanson Towne. Geo. H. Doran Co.
Five Men and Pompey, a Series of Dramatic Portraits, by Stephen Vincent Benét. Four Seas Co.
The Tragedy, a Fantasy in Verse, by Gilbert Moyer. Four Seas Co.

PLAYS:
The Nameless One: A Play, by Anne Cleveland Cheney. Fred. A. Stokes Co.

ANTHOLOGIES:
The Home Book of Verse for Young Folks, edited by Burton Egbert Stevenson.

PROSE:
The Epic Songs of Russia, by Isabel Florence Hapgood. With Introduction by J. W. Mackail, M.A., LL.D. Scribner.
Catholic Anthology

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POEMS BY

W. B. Yeats          Harriet Monroe
T. S. Eliot          M. B.
Douglas Goldring     Harold Monro
Alice Corbin         Carl Sandburg
T. E. H.             Allen Upward
Orrick Johns         William Carlos Williams
Alfred Kreymborg     Ezra Pound
Edgar Lee Masters    John Rodker

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